

REMARKS

Claims 1-21, 23 and 24-30 are all the claims pending in the application, including new claims 25-30 added by the present Amendment.

Claims 5, 7-21, and 24 are allowed.

Claims 1-4, 6, and 23 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being anticipated by previously-cited Yamakita et al. (US 6,285,780, hereafter “Yamakita”). Applicants respectfully traverse the claim rejection as follows.

The system of claim 1 has normalization processing condition determining means on each of the reading side and receiving side. The Examiner asserts that the iridial granule extractor in Yamakita corresponds to the reading side normalization processing condition determining means. (See Office Action, page 3). However, the iridial granule extractor merely extracts an image portion corresponding to the iridial granule, and does not determine any normalization processing conditions as the normalizers (e.g., the geometric normalizer and density normalizer; see Figure 1 of Yamakita) on the receiving side do. Since none of the normalizers in Yamakita is on the reading side, Yamakita fails to teach or suggest use of the reading side normalization processing condition determining means. Therefore, claim 1 is allowable over the prior art.

Also, claim 1 is amended in a non-narrowing manner to correct an error in the claim.

With respect to claim 2, Applicants submit that claim 2 is allowable over the prior art for at least one of the reasons mentioned by the Examiner in relation to the allowed claims. In particular, the Examiner indicated that claims 5, 7-21, and 24 are allowed, because the prior art

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fails to disclose, *inter alia*, the image reading apparatus outputting reduced image data generated from the image data by the reading side normalization processing condition determining means. Since claim 2 claims this feature, which has been indicated as including allowable subject matter, claim 2 should be allowed as well.

Regarding claims 3 and 6, Applicants submit that Yamakita does not teach or suggest all of the limitations of the claims. Specifically, Yamakita fails to teach or suggest an image apparatus including a condition changing means for changing the normalization processing condition, as required by claims 3 and 6. Furthermore, Yamakita fails to disclose that the normalization processing means is capable of carrying out normalization processing on the image data under the normalization processing condition changed by the condition changing means. The Examiner's rejection of the claims is broadly-worded and does not explicitly assert that these features of the claims are taught or suggested by Yamakita. Moreover, after reviewing the reference, it does not appear that Yamakita discloses these features of the present claims. Instead, each normalizer in Yamakita (e.g., the geometric normalizer or density normalizer) uniquely determines the normalization processing condition from the iridial granule image or other parameters. Hence, claims 3 and 6 are allowable over the prior art.

The Examiner contends that a processor in Yamakita performs normalization to process (and thereby change) an iridial granule. In the Examiner's Response to Arguments, the Examiner further contends that Yamakita discloses two normalization processing means: 1) the iridial granule extractor and 2) the processor which converts the iridial granule data to normalization parameters (θ and d). However, claims 3 and 6 describe not only normalization of the image data but also a change of the normalization condition. To the extent a geometric

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normalizer adjusts a “d” or “θ” value of the iridial granule, this merely accounts for a change in the image data. However, the claims recite a change in the normalization condition. Thus, the Examiner’s rebuttal does not render claims 3 and 6 unpatentable.

In the system of claim 4, a parameter of the image reading apparatus is taken into account in determining the normalization processing condition on the receiving side. On the other hand, no parameter of a CCD camera in Yamakita is used by the normalizers to determine the normalization processing condition. Thus, claim 4 is allowable over Yamakita.

With further regard to claim 6, an analogous argument as the above argument for claim 4 applies. Thus, claim 6 is allowable for this additional reason.

Claim 23 requires that at least one of the normalization processing condition, reduced image data generated from the image data by the normalization processing condition determining means, and a parameter for determining the normalization processing condition are output to the image receiving apparatus in addition to the image data. In Yamakita, however, as shown in Figure 1, only the image data is transferred from each unit to its subsequent unit. Therefore, Yamakita fails to teach or suggest all limitations of claim 23. Accordingly, claim 23 is not anticipated by Yamakita.

Claims 25-30 are added by the present Amendment to further define the present invention. These new claims are believed to be allowable, at least because of their dependence from claims 1, 2, 3, 4, 6, and 23, respectively.

In view of the above, reconsideration and allowance of this application are now believed to be in order, and such actions are hereby solicited. If any points remain in issue which the

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Examiner feels may be best resolved through a personal or telephone interview, the Examiner is kindly requested to contact the undersigned at the telephone number listed below.

The USPTO is directed and authorized to charge all required fees, except for the Issue Fee and the Publication Fee, to Deposit Account No. 19-4880. Please also credit any overpayments to said Deposit Account.

Respectfully submitted,

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WASHINGTON OFFICE



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PATENT TRADEMARK OFFICE

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Cameron W. Beddard".

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